

Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities Grant Completed

The Nebraska Library Commission's public computer center project, *Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities*, was a major activity during the biennium. The three-year project (August 1, 2010 to September 30, 2013) expanded broadband capacity; upgraded public computer center resources in libraries; and advanced access to employment, learning, health information, and eGovernment services. The U.S. Department of Commerce National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), provided **\$2,416,403**—matched by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation with **\$1,251,786**. The total project budget was **\$3,668,189**.

During the biennium, the Nebraska Library Commission expended the final \$122,973 allocated to computer equipment, software, and furniture—with 147 library buildings (100%) receiving their complete orders. Broadband upgrades demonstrated significant improvement in community access to information. The goal of forty-five broadband upgrades was surpassed, with 168 upgrades completed. The average speed moved from 3.8 Mbps to 19.7 Mbps. All 147 libraries now offer wireless networks for public use. Electrical/wiring upgrades were completed by forty-seven libraries. The libraries held open houses and other events to celebrate the new public computer centers.

Library Broadband Builds NEBRASKA COMMUNITIES

BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation

Nebraska
Library Commission

BROADBANDUSA
CONNECTING AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

One key to broadband adoption and the utilization of the public computer centers was ongoing delivery of online and face-to-face training—a total of 83,769 hours for 32,200 participants. The Nebraska Library Commission provided staff training, including Marketing and Communication Gymnasium, Technology Planning Summer Camps, E-Rate Sessions, and ADA Software Training. The following Educational Programming Partners offered library customers basic computer skills, digital literacy, and eGovernment access training at the libraries:

- Center for Rural Affairs
- Center for Rural Entrepreneurship
- Nebraska's Community Colleges
- Nebraska Court Administrator's Office
- National Network of Libraries of Medicine: MidContinental Region
- Nebraska Community Foundation
- Nebraska Department of Labor
- University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension
- University of Nebraska Medical Center, McGoogan Library of Medicine

See <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/lbbnc/libs/LBBNCFinalReportDec2013.pdf> for a complete list of classes in the Final Report.

“People who were nervous to even touch a computer gained confidence and realized that they too can create Word documents, communicate with friends and family via e-mail, and become comfortable using the Internet.”

– Jennifer Einspahr,
Arapahoe Public Library

This project was supported in part by the Department of Commerce National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, as administered by the Nebraska Library Commission.

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From the Director...

We are pleased to present the Nebraska Library Commission's biennial report highlighting notable activities, events, projects, and successes over the past two years. Along with the Library Commission's ongoing programs and services, several grant projects and other initiatives have involved much time and effort. The Commission's three-year Broadband Technology Opportunity Program grant, *Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities*, was completed this past year. The project was successful well beyond its original goals and objectives. The *Cultivating Rural Librarians' 21st Century Skills* grant project was extended beyond its original funding period and was completed at the end of October 2014. This project also reflected results that went well beyond its original and ambitious objectives. The *Smart Investing@your library*® project was launched in partnership with the Northeast Library System and through Nebraska's public libraries.

Implementation of the new Nebraska *Guidelines for Public Library Accreditation* came about as a result of the good and creative work of the Public Library Accreditation Review Committee. The Commission's weekly *NCompass Live* webinars have continued to offer various and timely topics important to Nebraska's library workers, trustees, friends, and advocates. And the *Big Talk from Small Libraries* online conference was first held in 2013 and again earlier this year. The conferences involved hundreds of participants and included people from nearly every state and some foreign countries. The growing interest in e-books prompted a request for state funds to supplement funds contributed by over 150 public libraries to provide downloadable e-books and digital audiobooks. The *Nebraska eReads* funding proposal resulted in \$150,000 in state funds for each year of the 2013-2015 biennium. Also notable is the reconfiguration of Nebraska's regional library systems that has come about through discussions with regional library system

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Nebraska Library Commissioners: Sherry Crow, Chair, Kearney, term expires 2016; Steve Batty, Vice-Chair, McCook, term expires 2015; Diane Boyd, South Sioux City, term expires 2015; Molly Fisher, Lincoln, term expires 2015; Patricia Gross, Bayard, term expires 2016; and Michael LaCroix, Omaha, term expires 2016. Commission meetings are held the second Friday of every other month or as scheduled by public action of the board.

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This publication was supported in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act.

Nebraska Library Commission Funding July 1, 2012, through June 30, 2014

State of Nebraska Funds	\$ 7,520,683
Federal Funds	5,558,722
Cash Funds	787,985
Total	\$13,867,390

Projects Funded through the Nebraska Library Commission July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2014

Braille Services (Utah State Library)	\$ 5,175
Collaborative Summer Library Program	9,110
Continuing Education and Training	48,153
Electronic Information Resources	821,473
United for Libraries	20,588
Interlibrary Loan (Lender Compensation)	147,058
Local Library Public Computer Centers (NTIA/BTOP/Gates)	896,399
LSTA/Library Improvement	34,020
Motion Picture Licensing for Public Libraries	32,523
Nebraska Center for the Book	4,953
OverDrive Downloadable Books	268,462
Public Library Statistical Reporting Software	8,280
Regional Library Systems	1,061,808
Scholarships, Stipends, Internships	360,443
State Aid to Public Libraries	728,882
Youth Grants for Excellence	41,002
Total	\$4,488,329

Note: Project funds may be distributed over more than one fiscal year.

Thanks to Our Commissioners



Commissioners (l. to r.) Steve Batty, Patricia Gross, John Dale, Charles Gordon, Sherry Crow, and Diane Boyd confer with Commission staff Rod Wagner and Richard Miller at a quarterly Commission meeting.

Nebraska Library Commission staff members want to thank the Library Commissioners who served during this past biennium for their commitment to improving Nebraska library services. As representatives of the public appointed by the governor, the Commissioners are the primary force ensuring that the agency is fully responsible for the statewide promotion, development, and coordination of library programs and services in accordance with nationally acceptable library standards. They are primarily involved in policy making, director relations, strategic planning, fiscal matters, operations, and advocacy. Their dedication and involvement is integral to our success.

Commissioners are appointed by the governor and serve three-year terms. Meetings are held the second Friday of every other month, or as scheduled by public action of the board. For more information, including meeting minutes and agendas, see the Library Commission website at <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/>, search on Commission Meetings. Commissioners who served during the biennium were: **Steve Batty**, McCook; **Diane Boyd**, South Sioux City; **Sherry Crow**, Kearney; **John Dale**, Lincoln; **Charles Gordon**, Fremont; **Patricia Gross**, Bayard; **Molly Fisher**, Lincoln; and **Michael LaCroix**, Omaha. ➡

Library Commission Staff Transitions

Arrivals

- **Jerry Breazile**, Business Manager III
- **Barbara Caron**, Federal Aid Administrator I (Grant Compliance Officer)
- **Lynda Clause**, Staff Assistant II (Interlibrary Loan & Reference Staff Assistant)
- **Eric Green**, Senior Librarian (Panhandle Library System Coordinator)
- **Aimee Owen**, Talking Book and Braille Service Library Readers Advisor
- **Mary Sauers**, Senior Librarian (Government Information Services Librarian)

Departures

- **Janice Anderson**, Talking Book and Braille Service Library Readers Advisor
- **Jim Atkins**, Office Clerk III (Talking Book and Braille Service Circulation Clerk)
- **Sue Biltoft**, Business Manager III
- **Barbara Caron**, Federal Aid Administrator I (Grant Compliance Officer)
- **John Felton**, Planning and Data Services Coordinator
- **Angela Gunther Gonzalez**, Federal Aid Administrator I (Grant Compliance Officer)
- **Evelyn Kubert**, Staff Assistant II (Interlibrary Loan & Reference Staff Assistant)

Reassignment

- **Dave Eckmann**, Library Technician (Information Services Technician) to Office Clerk III (Talking Book and Braille Service Circulation Clerk)
- **Mary Geibel**, Secretary II to Library Technician (Information Services Technician)
- **Beth Goble**, Library Commission Unit Director (Government Information Services Director) to Librarian (Historical Services Librarian)
- **JoAnn McManus**, BTOP Project and Program Coordinator to Grants Coordinator
- **Jennifer Wrampe**, Staff Assistant I to Staff Assistant II

Employee of the Year 2013



Mary Geibel, Information Services Technician

Manager of the Year 2013



Richard Miller, Library Development Director

Employee of the Year 2014



Laura Johnson, Continuing Education Coordinator

Manager of the Year 2014



Scott Scholz, Talking Book & Braille Service Circulation and Audio Production Coordinator

From the Director... (continued)

representatives, work of the Regional Library Systems Configuration Task Force, public input, and action of the Nebraska Library Commission.

The change from six to four regions is expected to be in place by January 2015.

Once again, the Nebraska Library Commission wishes to acknowledge the service and dedication of the thousands of library workers, trustees, friends, and advocates who strive to offer exceptional service to Nebraskans.

Rod Wagner ➤

NCompass

Are you missing out on important library information?

Subscribe to the Nebraska Library Commission's *NCompass E-Newslist* for weekly access to information about Nebraska library activities.
<http://eepurl.com/HSkX/>

A weekly news sheet from the Nebraska Library Commission, <http://nlc.nebraska.gov>

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Ed. Note: Due to state budget reductions, future print editions of the **NCompass Newsletter** will be limited to the Annual/Biennial Report editions, until further notice. To receive regular information from the Nebraska Library Commission, subscribe to the weekly **NCompass E-Newslist**. Fill out the form at <http://eepurl.com/HSkX/> to stay abreast of Nebraska library activities. Receive a weekly e-mail in your inbox (currently Mondays around 9:00 a.m. CT) with a short summary of each posting on the **NCompass Blog** from the previous week. Click on the headline in the e-mail message to read the complete content of the blogpost and to comment. ➤

NCompass

Award Honors Nebraska Library Commission

The Nebraska Center for the Book Board selected the Nebraska Library Commission to receive the **2013 Jane Geske Award**. This is a special honor, given Jane Geske's association as a past director of the Library Commission. The award was presented at the Nebraska Center for the Book's annual meeting and Celebration of Nebraska Books in Fall 2013.

Since 1901 the Nebraska Library Commission has been dedicated to the statewide promotion, development and coordination of library services. Underscoring the Commission's long-term commitment to literature and literacy, several Library Commission staff members served on the founding board of the Nebraska Center for the Book in 1990. The Nebraska Library Commission has

continued to provide staff support and funding to ensure that the activities and efforts of the Nebraska Center for the Book volunteers can be consistently offered.

The Jane Geske Award is presented annually by the Nebraska Center for the Book. The purpose of the award is to recognize a Nebraska association, organization, business, library, school, academic institution, or other group that has made an exceptional, long-term contribution to one or more of these fields in Nebraska: Literacy, Reading, Bookselling, Books, Libraries, and/or Nebraska Literature. Further information about the award and past recipients can be found at <http://centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/awards/geskeaward.html>. ➤



The 2013 Jane Geske Award was accepted by Nebraska Library Commission staff and Commissioners (l. to r.) Sherry Crow, Patricia Gross, Rod Wagner, Steve Batty, Mary Jo Ryan, Richard Miller, Molly Fisher, and Lisa Kelly.

New Guidelines for Accreditation Implemented

Public library accreditation encourages excellent library service in Nebraska communities. It establishes minimum standards for library service, ensures that libraries adhere to those standards, offers service benchmarks, and provides evidence that certain expenditures, services, and practices are needed and expected by Nebraskans. New *Nebraska Guidelines for Public Library Accreditation* were implemented by the Nebraska Library Commission for the first time in July 2013 for public libraries eligible for

accreditation or reaccreditation. A committee of eleven librarians, the Public Library Accreditation Review Committee, submitted recommendations for this new approach to accreditation. The intensified focus on community-based planning and peer comparison was accompanied by training by Library Commission and Regional Library System staff. For more information see <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/libaccred/> or contact Richard Miller, Library Development Director, 402-471-3175, 800-307-2665, richard.miller@nebraska.gov. ➤



Nebraskans Speak Out for Libraries

(l. to r.) Brenda Ealey, Lincoln City Libraries Branch Manager; Patricia Gross, Nebraska Library Commissioner (Bayard); Rod Wagner, Director, Nebraska Library Commission (Lincoln); Rep. Jeff Fortenberry; Dr. Sherry Crow, Nebraska Library Commissioner (Kearney); and Steve Batty, Nebraska Library Commission Chair (McCook) at 2013 Public Service Award presentation.

During the biennium Nebraska library representatives traveled to Washington, DC, to participate in national library advocacy activities. Major library-related issues addressed included Library Services and Technology Act appropriations and re-authorization, school library provisions of Elementary and Secondary Education Act, E-Rate telecommunications discounts for schools and libraries, and other federal funding for libraries.

Nebraska Library Commission Director Rod Wagner presented *United for Libraries' 2013 Public Service Award* to Rep. Jeff Fortenberry during

the 2013 National Library Legislative Day. Rep. Fortenberry was the first Congressman willing to speak up about the importance of not requiring libraries to test for lead in all children's books. He recognized that a legislative fix that reasonably dealt with the issue was needed and introduced H.R.1692 "...to amend the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act to exempt ordinary books from the lead limit in such Act." The Public Service Award is given annually by *United for Libraries* to a legislator who has been especially supportive of libraries. 



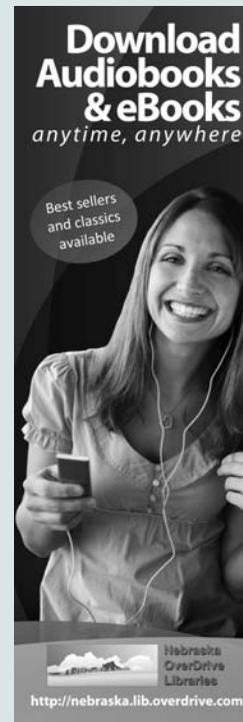
Nebraska library representatives participating in 2014 Library Advocacy Day are (l. to r.): Rod Wagner, Director, Nebraska Library Commission (Lincoln); Dr. Sherry Crow, Chair and Commissioner, Nebraska Library Commission, and President of the Nebraska School Librarians Association (Kearney); and Many Shorr, Assistant Director, Community Programs and Services, Omaha Public Library, and incoming Chair, Nebraska Library Association Advocacy Committee; with Patty Sheetz, Senior Advisor for Congressman Jeff Fortenberry.

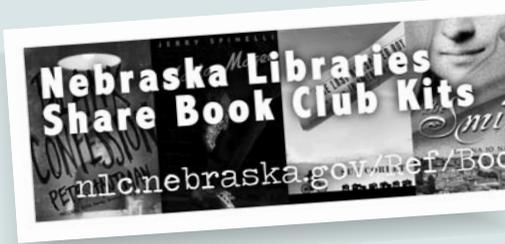
More Audiobooks and E-books Available to Nebraskans

The Nebraska OverDrive Libraries cooperative purchase group expanded from 109 to 150 member libraries during the biennium, and library customers downloaded 170,947 audiobooks and 577,560 e-books.

Nebraska eReads funding, approved by the Legislature for the Library Commission's 2013-2015 biennium budget, provided the Nebraska OverDrive Libraries with an additional \$69,000 to purchase materials. The total **Nebraska eReads** funding of \$150,000 was divided between the cooperative purchase group, Omaha Public Library, Ralston Public Library, and Lincoln City Libraries based on the size of their legal service areas.

The Library Commission coordinated and supported the OverDrive service for the Nebraska OverDrive Libraries, paid the annual maintenance fees, and contributed funds for materials purchase. Any legally-established public library (population under 50,000) was invited to participate. For more information see <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/overdrive/> or contact Susan Knisely, Nebraska Library Commission Online Services Librarian, 402-471-3849, 800-307-2665, susan.knisely@nebraska.gov, or Devra Dragos, Nebraska Library Commission Technology & Access Services Director, 402-471-4335 or 800-307-2665, devra.dragos@nebraska.gov. 





Book Club Kits and a New Website

In December 2013, changes were made to the book club kit website to increase customer ease of use (see <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/Ref/Bookclub/>).

Instead of filling out a form, library staff need only click on a corresponding request form for the title they are interested in borrowing and the title and number of available copies appear automatically. Genre search is also available, as well as limiting by number of copies and formats. There

are comprehensive title lists, both with and without book covers for those librarians who want to print lists for book club leaders. Because the collection is constantly changing, printed lists are quickly outdated and online use is recommended for the most up-to-date information. As an added enhancement, corresponding DVDs are now available to accompany book club reads for a book/movie combination discussion. When showing the movies at the library, please check the Motion Picture Licensing Agreement at <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/discounts/motionpicture.aspx> to ensure that the movie is included in the site license.

Thanks to the many libraries that contributed to the Library Commission collection of book club kits, more than **eight hundred titles** are now available for book clubs. For more information contact Lisa Kelly, Nebraska Library Commission Information Services Director, 402-471-4015, 800-307-2665, or lisa.kelly@nebraska.gov.

Ann Quigley at Valentine Public Library donated book club kits and commented, "It is wonderful to have the resource from the Library Commission so I am glad we can assist in the supply of popular titles. We enjoyed the discussions and hope many others will as well."



State Advisory Council on Libraries members meet with System Administrators and Nebraska Library Commission staff to discuss Regional Library Systems Configuration.

Council Advises Commission

The State Advisory Council on Libraries was established by the Nebraska Library Commission to make recommendations on statewide library development, planning, and federal library programs—including providing input on the *Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Five-Year Program Evaluation* and the *LSTA Long-Range Plan*. The members represent all types of libraries and all areas of Nebraska. They consist of library professionals, paraprofessionals, supporters, and customers.

They met five times during the biennium and provided input on library legislation, policies, and issues. They focused on advocacy for libraries and library service—sharing strategies, data, and stories. One meeting centered on school librarians and 21st Century educational challenges (21st Century Learner, Learning4Life, and Common Core Standards). Another meeting featured a report on the Nebraska Library Commission biennium budget status and timetable. Input was solicited on library programs including Nebraska Libraries and Digital Literacy, *Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities*, Library Marketing, Financial Education in Libraries, One Book One Nebraska, and the Regional Library Systems Configuration Task Force.

Council members included:

Robin Bernstein, Freeman-Lozier Library, Bellevue University
Kate Borchman Hassebrook, Lyons
Francine Canfield, Baright Public Library, Ralston

Deb Carlson, Lied Scottsbluff Public Library

John Dale, Wayne

Ceri Daniels, Cline, Williams, Wright, Johnson and Oldfather, LLP, Lincoln

Beth Falla, Lied Imperial Public Library

Steve Fosselman, Grand Island Public Library

Denise Harders, Republican Valley Library System, Hastings

Jayne Hlavac, Schuyler Central High School

Sherry Houston, Papillion

Beth Kabes, Educational Service Unit 7, Columbus

Cecelia Lawrence, North Platte Public Library

Pat Leach, Lincoln City Libraries

Trine McBride, Wayne

Betty Meyer, Thayer Central Community Schools, Hebron, NSLA Liaison

Vickie Retzlaff, Grant County Library, Hyannis

Sam Shaw, Nebraska State Penitentiary, Lincoln

Janet Stoeger Wilke, Ryan Library, University of Nebraska at Kearney

Christine Walsh, Kearney Public Library, NLA Liaison

Ellen Weed, Norfolk Regional Center
Kara Welch, Ainsworth Community Schools

Merrillene Wood, Learning Resource Center, Western NE Community College-Scottsbluff

Frank Zimmerman, Auburn

Commission Provides State Aid to Libraries

The Library Commission supported public libraries during the biennium with total payments of \$728,882 in direct state aid, including Dollars for Data and other special incentive awards. To be eligible for state aid, libraries must be accredited by the Nebraska Library Commission, must submit their annual Public Libraries Survey online, and their local funding must be at least equal to the lowest annual local revenue from the three previous years.

Direct State Aid. In 2013, 174 Nebraska public libraries earned state aid payments and 104 of these libraries also earned additional payments to acknowledge their achievement of reaching enhanced or excellent accreditation status. In 2014, 171 public libraries received state aid payments and 111 of these libraries also earned additional payments to acknowledge their achievement of reaching enhanced or excellent accreditation status.

Incentive Payments. Additional direct state aid payments, based on funds contributed to the library by another public entity, were made to eighty libraries in 2013 and to 78 libraries in 2014. A total of \$62,718

was distributed during the biennium as one-percent incentive payments for these libraries. In 2013 and again in 2014, twenty-one libraries were able to increase the amount received as support from their county governments.

Dollars for Data. The Library Commission awards incentive payments of \$200 to unaccredited libraries that complete and submit the annual Public Libraries Survey online through Bibliostat Collect®. Forty libraries qualified for these payments in 2012 and 35 libraries did so in 2013. Providing public library data is an important activity for all libraries so that the Library Commission and the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) have an accurate picture of public library service throughout Nebraska communities. Since submitting the annual survey is a necessary step toward meeting the standards of service outlined in the *Guidelines for Public Library Accreditation*, these libraries are now closer to achieving accredited status.

For more information, contact Richard Miller, see contact information on page 4.

Nebraska Memories Shares Cultural Resources

Nebraska Memories offered access to digitized Nebraska-related primary source materials, including glass plate negatives, photographs, postcards, stereoscopes, sheet music, maps, documents, and oral histories, at <http://memories.ne.gov/>. For Blog postings highlighting images and collections, see the Nebraska Memories category on the *NCompass Blog* at <http://nlcblogs.nebraska.gov/nlcblog/>. For more information or to consult on materials for inclusion, contact Devra Dragos, see contact information on page 5.



Sidney (NE) Mercantile Company Millinery Department
Source: Cheyenne County Historical Society and Museum

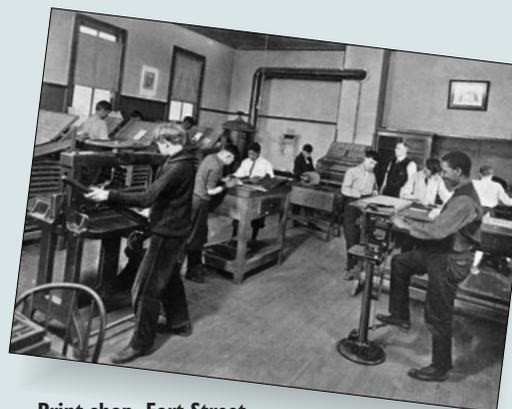
NCompass Live Wednesday Webinars Grow

The Nebraska Library Commission continued to offer free online webinars broadcast live every Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. CT. During this biennium, 102 episodes of *NCompass Live* were broadcast with 2,134 live attendees. Audience members watched from all across the U.S. and beyond, including Alaska, Barbados, Canada, the Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Jamaica, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

NCompass Live sessions were presented by Nebraska Library Commission staff and guest speakers from public, academic, and school libraries in Nebraska, as well as from

Arkansas, California, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee, Washington, Canada, Singapore, and Sweden.

More than 275 archived sessions are recorded and available for viewing at <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/ncompasslive/NCArchivist.asp>. For the list of upcoming sessions, go to <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/ncompasslive/>. To suggest a topic for *NCompass Live*, contact Christa Burns, Nebraska Library Commission Special Projects Librarian, 402-471-3107, 800-307-2265, or christa.burns@nebraska.gov



Print shop, Fort Street Special School for Boys
Source: Omaha Public School Archive Collection/Educational Research Library

Nebraska Public Library Statistical Survey

Registered Borrowers



Collection Size



Expenditures on Electronic Materials



Expenditures on Print Materials



The State of Public Libraries in Nebraska, 2012-2014

According to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), there are 8,956 public libraries in the fifty states and District of Columbia. In Nebraska, there are 267 legally established public libraries plus seven bookmobiles and eighteen branch facilities. Seven libraries in the state are combined with public schools and two are combined public/academic libraries. The 2012/2013 *Public Libraries Survey* in Nebraska was completed by almost 80% of the state's libraries. The results provide a reliable portrait of overall library service and usage trends in Nebraska.

Observing five-year trends for 2009 through 2013 reveals a few notable growth areas. The number of public access computers has increased again (22.4% over three years), although this trend may slow now that the federal grant responsible for much of this change has ended. The number of programs offered by public libraries has risen steadily for the past five years. Overall attendance has also climbed, increasing more than 12% since 2009, but has just begun to dip with the 2013 statistics.

Collections of downloadable e-books and audiobooks appear to have grown at an extraordinary rate in the past three years. That could be attributed to changes in the method used to count these items and to the increased participation in the statewide purchasing consortium for these materials. Nonetheless, collections of electronic materials have indeed expanded, even as the size of print collections has begun to decline slightly. This redistribution of material types is borne out by the change in collection expenditures, where a larger proportion of funds have gone to purchasing titles in electronic formats.

The number of items borrowed from public libraries is slowly declining, with a 4.6% decrease since 2009. The number of visits to library

buildings has declined slightly—a 4% decrease over five years. This trend makes sense when it is coupled with the increase in downloadable materials, which do not require a trip to the library for customers to borrow them. Certainly it appears that Nebraskans are utilizing their libraries since the number of library cards issued statewide has grown steadily for the past seven years.

Other trends revealed by the results of the 2012/2013 *Nebraska Public Libraries Survey* include the following:

- 153 Nebraska Public Libraries now loan e-books. That's a 7% increase over last year and comprises 57% of Nebraska public libraries. The state population served by these libraries is 1,474,885 or 79% of all Nebraska residents.
- Number of total resources in Nebraska public libraries: 9,359,462 items.
- Number of Internet computers available to the public: 2,849—an increase of over 22% since 2011.
- Public libraries loaned 13,217,839 items in FY2013.
- Number of registered library users: 1,031,149.
- Number of public library customers served: 8,525,436.
- Libraries providing wireless Internet access: 79%.
- Libraries that have active websites: 207 or 77.5%.
- Nine Nebraska public libraries were recognized as "Star Libraries" in the 2013 *Library Journal* Index of Public Library Service. Four of these libraries have earned stars in every edition of the index since it began.
- The average connection speed for libraries participating in the Library Commission's Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) grant increased to 19.8 Mbps.

(continued on page 9)

The State of Public Libraries in Nebraska (continued)

Selected Nebraska Library Statistics FY 2010-2011 through 2012-2013

	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	3-Yr Change
Registered Borrowers	1,024,376	1,026,086	1,031,149	0.66%
Total Visits	8,640,282	8,656,034	8,525,436	-1.33%
Items Borrowed	13,792,713	13,497,292	13,217,839	-4.17%
Items Borrowed per Capita	9.49	9.29	8.64	-8.96%
Internet Computers for Public Use	2,327	2,687	2,849	22.43%
Internet Computers per Library	8.68	10.03	10.67	22.89%
Uses of Library Internet Computers	2,346,620	2,273,182	2,222,024	-5.31%
Libraries Providing Free Wi-Fi	199	211	215	8.04%
Libraries Maintaining a Website	141	167	207	46.8%
No. Library Programs Offered	25,458	27,159	28,485	11.89%
Library Program Attendance	639,706	686,531	655,259	2.43%
Number of Books in Collection	5,819,443	5,659,397	5,549,691	-4.64%
Number of Print Subscriptions	14,261	14,055	13,084	-8.25%
Number of E-books Available	459,127	962,807	1,813,987	295.09%
Number of Audio Materials	271,409	657,855	1,035,921	281.68%
Number of Video Materials	302,785	311,432	317,888	4.99%
Total Materials Held	7,529,367	8,288,600	9,359,462	24.31%
Annual Hours Open	413,384	415,953	414,499	0.27%
Service Area Population	1,453,288	1,453,012	1,529,192	5.22%
Local Government Revenue	\$46,279,509	\$47,694,603	\$49,634,811	7.25%

Source: Nebraska Public Libraries Survey FY2013 (213 or 79.8% responding)

Nebraska Public Library Statistical Survey

Number of Library Internet Computers



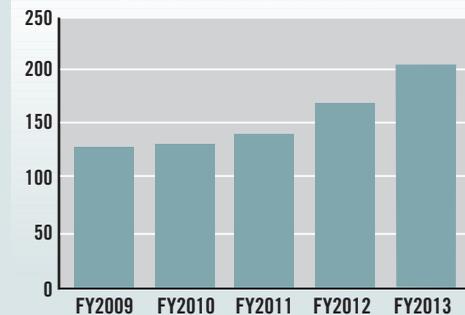
Library Program Attendance



Number of Library Programs



Libraries With a Website



WHY YOUR PUBLIC LIBRARY IS SO IMPORTANT

THEY HAVE E-BOOKS

152 Nebraska public libraries loaned **436,090** e-books—that's **57%** of the state's public libraries.

THE LIBRARY IS A TECHNOLOGY CENTER

237 public libraries provide free public Internet access—that's **88%**

Number of free Internet computers available to the public: **2,687**

Libraries providing wireless Internet access: **216** or **81%**

Libraries that connect to their community through social networks: **164** or **61.2%**

THE LIBRARY IS A LEARNING CENTER

Libraries delivered **27,159** programs which were attended by **686,531** people.

544,465 children attended **17,999** programs held in Nebraska libraries.

THE LIBRARY IS A COMMUNITY CENTER WITH THE RESOURCES YOU NEED

Number of resources in Nebraska libraries: **8,288,600**

Items loaned in FY2012: **13,497,292**

Number of registered library card-holders: **1,026,086**

Number of times people used their public library: **8,656,034**

Nebraskans that live in a community served by a public library: **80%**

Source: 2011-2012 Nebraska Public Libraries Survey (222 or 82% responding).

Commission Supports Children's Services

Throughout the biennium, the Nebraska Library Commission made support for library services to children a priority. The Commission supported the statewide Summer

Reading Program by providing training and materials. The Library Commission provided statewide workshops, co-sponsored by the Regional Library Systems. Sally Snyder, Nebraska Library Commission Children and Young Adult Library Services Coordinator, gave book-talks across the state. The

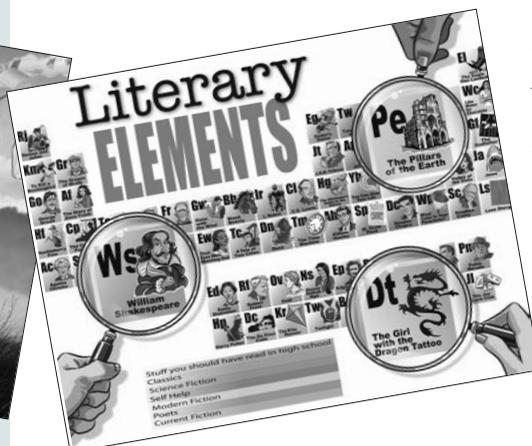
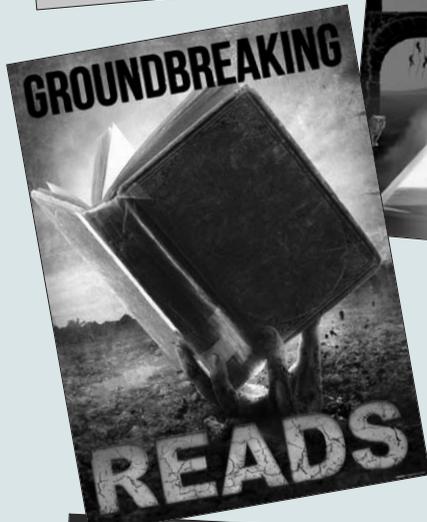
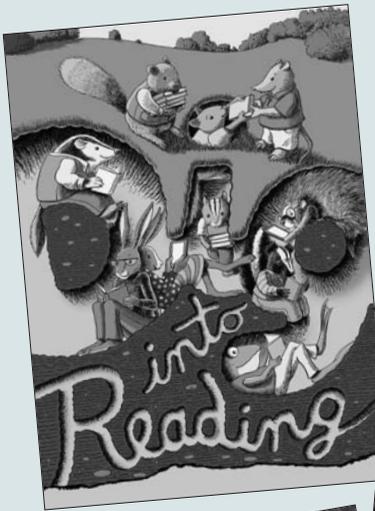
Library Commission supplied manuals and booklists to complement the theme. Additional materials were made available on the Library Commission website. Children and teens also participated in the Summer Reading Program through the Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service. As a member of the Collaborative Summer Library Program consortium, which consists of all fifty states and the District of Columbia and two territories, the Library Commission contributed funding for development and distribution of Summer Reading Program materials to libraries across Nebraska, see <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/youth/summerreading/>. The 2013 theme was "Dig into Reading," the teen theme was "Beneath the Surface," and the adult theme

was "Groundbreaking Reads." The 2014 theme was "Fizz, Boom, Read," the teen theme was "Spark a Reaction," and the adult theme was "Literary Elements."

The Commission also sponsored One Book reading programs to encourage Nebraska kids and teens to read and discuss the same book with each other and with the adults in their lives. The 2013 One Book for Nebraska Kids selection was *Aliens on Vacation* by Clete Barrett Smith. The 2013 One Book for Nebraska Teens was *Leviathan* by Scott Westerfeld. The 2014 One Book for Nebraska Kids selection was *Lawn Boy* by Gary Paulsen. The 2014 One Book for Nebraska Teens was *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs. The Nebraska Library Commission Reference team distributed book bag kits to public and school libraries, see <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/youth/obok/>.

Twenty-seven Children's Services grants were awarded to public libraries and regional library systems for a total of \$41,002 in the past two years. Projects included bringing authors to libraries, family activities and events in libraries, and sensory-friendly story times for children with special needs. The Library Commission awards these grants annually to give Nebraska libraries the opportunity to expand youth services in new directions. It is expected that this funding will provide a foundation for ongoing services that will be continued with community support or through reallocation of library funds.

For more information contact Sally Snyder, Nebraska Library Commission Children and Young Adult Library Services Coordinator, 402-471-4003, 800-307-2665, or sally.snyder@nebraska.gov.



IMLS Grant Supports Next Generation of Librarians

The Nebraska Library Commission's \$721,033 grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program continues to improve the quality of library service in Nebraska through recruitment and support of promising library science students. The project, *Cultivating Rural Librarians' Technology Skills*, is equipping students with the skills to provide high quality, individualized library customer service by awarding scholarship, internship, and stipend support to students engaged in pre-professional (associate and bachelor's-level education) and, secondarily, master's-level education.

In addition to financial support for tuition, fees, and course-required materials, the value-added learning component of the program enhanced the formal education experience by familiarizing the students with current skill sets, such as digital literacy. Students participated in training opportunities—for example, the *NCompass Live Tech Talks* and e-book/e-reader workshops—and then reflected on their learning. Over time, the students made connections as to how their new knowledge transfers to their academic and work settings and how their skills make a difference in the lives of library customers.

The Nebraska Library Commission worked to cultivate 21st century skills through:

- **Scholarships, internships, and stipends.** In FY2013, sixty-seven scholarships totaling \$169,828 were awarded. In FY2014, forty scholarships totaling \$122,033 were awarded. Over the course of two years, stipends for laptop purchase were awarded to thirty-three students; fourteen students received stipends to join professional library associations; twenty-eight students received stipends to attend national or regional conferences; and two students received Nebraska Library Digital Literacy

Coaching Corps stipends. In FY2013, internship grants totaling \$19,250 were awarded to seventeen public libraries. In FY 2014, internship grants totaling \$32,000 were awarded to twenty-one libraries.

- **Value-added learning.** Consultation, training, national conference attendance, professional organization memberships, and social and face-to-face networking helped scholarship recipients build 21st century learning and technology skills that can be transferred to library customers. More than 175 training opportunities were presented to the scholarship students. Health literacy, digital libraries, mobile device services, innovative customer service, and Nebraska Learns 2.0 "Things" such as Pinterest and Flickr were topics of interest to the students. Methods of delivery included live and recorded webcasts, online learning modules, camps, conference sessions, and hands-on training.
- **Recruitment.** Contacting promising high school and college students and diverse library personnel and matching them with educational/employment opportunities at appropriate levels of the career/education ladder remained a priority. Diversity recruitment was increased, with exhibits and displays at targeted events.
- **Communication.** A multi-faceted marketing and communication campaign helped raise awareness and identify prospects for library service careers—disseminating the student learning experience. Traditional marketing strategies were enhanced with a Web-based Storybank (see <http://librarystorybank.nebraska.gov/>) and other Web 2.0 communication strategies to encourage online social networking, such as the Nebraska Librarians Learning Together Facebook page, see www.facebook.com/NebraskaLibrarians. 



"The 21st Century Librarian scholarship program has helped to advance my career in the field of librarianship. Thanks to the many trainings that I have attended, I am confident in my position and able to create new programs at my library. I really enjoy the Nebraska Librarians Learning Together Facebook page and finding out new information and ideas."

– Excerpt from a scholarship application submitted by a student who received previous scholarships.

Stories from Interlibrary Loan Services...

"Dear Lynda—Wanted to personally thank you for your help in securing the piece of music from the Denver Public Library entitled 'The Fly in Church' —I have long wanted to see this piece of music again as my sister recited this piece for many Custer County groups back in the early 1960s. When the lady who worked with my sister on the piece those many years ago passed away, I asked the family if they had the piece. Unfortunately through the years the piece was lost. I told this story to our library aide and she said that the Nebraska Library Commission would be the place to go to find the piece—and she was right! I was truly amazed and delighted when the original piece of sheet music arrived at our school this week for me to re-acquaint myself with and show my sister. Thank you so much for your part in helping us get the chance to see the piece of music once again. ...The Nebraska Library Commission is the place to go. Thank you so much for helping us find this 'old friend' from the past." 

Innovation Drives Talking Book Outreach

Nebraska Library Commission's **Talking Book and Braille Service** pursued a variety of strategies to encourage individuals to sign up for service:

- Talking Book and Braille Service (TBBS) produced two YouTube videos: *Talking Books: Relax and Enjoy!*, showcasing service to seniors, and *Talking Books: Here, Now*, which targets qualifying students, school librarians, and educators. The Nebraska Health Care Association posted video links in an e-newsletter. National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) highlighted Nebraska's outreach videos in an NLS *Operations Alert* and in its quarterly publication, *News*.
- Two 30-second radio PSAs were distributed to Nebraska radio stations.
- Informational articles were carried in Lincoln's 55+ publication for seniors, the Republican Valley Library System's newsletter, *Lincoln Journal Star*, *Omaha World-Herald* print and online editions, *Nebraska History* newsletter, League of Human Dignity's *On the Level*, and other Nebraska-based newsletters.
- *Nebraska Life* magazine carried ads for Talking Books.
- Nebraska Department of Revenue distributed information about TBBS through its GovDelivery® Subscription Service.
- Brochures were distributed at the Library Commission booth at Nebraska Library Association/Nebraska Association of School Librarians conferences, League of Municipalities and the Nebraska Association of County Officials annual conferences, World Day on the Mall, Mission of Mercy Dental Clinic, and Teacher's Nights at the Durham Museum.
- Presentations—focused on TBBS services, Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) for direct audio and Braille downloads, and the new BARD app for iOS devices—were offered at the state conventions of



Volunteers are celebrated at the Volunteer Luncheon at the Nebraska Library Commission.

the National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska and the American Council of the Blind of Nebraska, assisted living centers, and independent living apartments. Presentations were also made at meetings of a number of nonprofit organizations that work with disabilities, including Easter Seals Nebraska, United Cerebral Palsy of Nebraska, stroke survivors groups, service clubs, and Spina Bifida support groups.

- Tours were conducted for Aging Partners staff (the agency on aging for southeast Nebraska), Girls' State participants, and staff from the State Library of Kansas.
- After personal contact, informational packets were sent to medical care centers, eye care professionals, senior living organizations, agencies on aging, county senior services, libraries, support groups for Parkinson's disease and Spina Bifida, veterans support offices, and rehabilitation programs. A classroom packet was sent to Amherst Public School for a unit on Braille.
- A variety of outreach efforts targeted qualifying Nebraska veterans and members of Nebraska's Hispanic communities were initiated.
- Librarians received information through the 2013 Nebraska Library Association Conference panel discussion on "Library Service to Adults with Special Needs," Regional Library

System directors' quarterly meetings, and *NCompass Live* webinars. Presentations were also given at Omaha Public Library locations and at a



Talking Book & Braille Service Volunteer Services Coordinator Annette Hall (l.) presents a 15-year volunteer award and t-shirt to Paul Killion.

University of Nebraska at Omaha Special Libraries class.

National Volunteer Week was celebrated with volunteer receptions featuring guest speakers and recognizing milestones of service.

As part of the national technology upgrade, TBBS recycled most of the cassette collection to make space for the books on cartridge. Borrowers were assisted in adopting BARD and the TBBS online catalog.

For more information contact David Oertli, Nebraska Library Commission Talking Book and Braille Service Director, 402-471-4005, 800-742-7691, david.oertli@nebraska.gov, or see <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/tbbs/>.



Talking Book Committee Supports Access through Technology

The Advisory Committee to the Nebraska Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service (TBBS) provided input regarding programs and policies. The nine-member committee, comprised of talking book readers and service providers, met twice each year.

Staff sought input from the committee prior to conducting a telephone survey of talking book and Braille borrowers. The survey was targeted at a sample group of borrowers whose demographics closely match the TBBS customer group overall. The committee helped to consider how results from the survey could be used in promoting the Talking Book and Braille Service. Ease of use of playback equipment and the scope and variety of Nebraska-based audiobooks and magazines were identified as strengths.

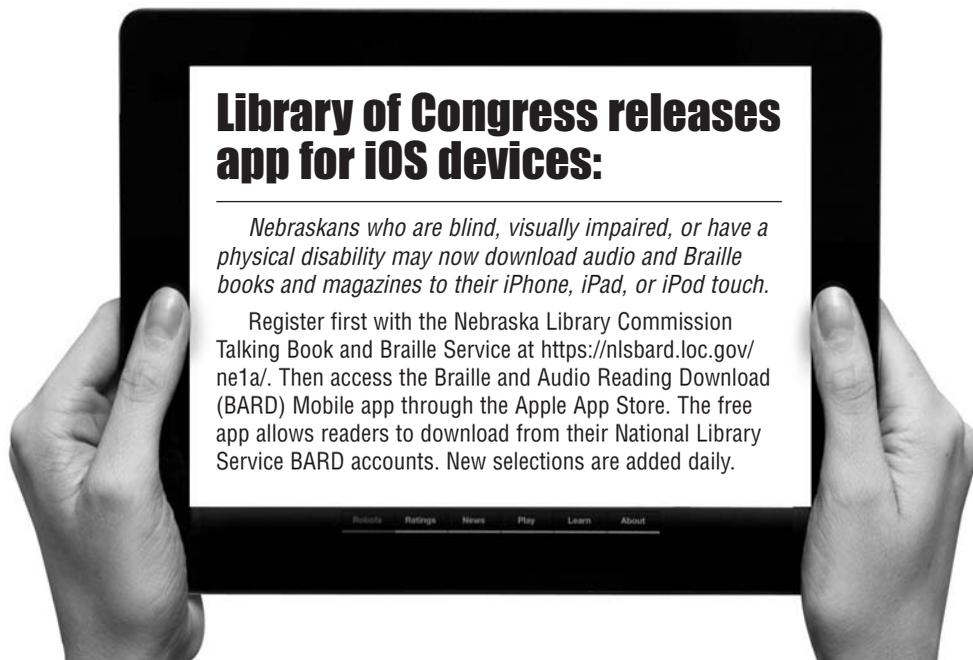
The committee also provided input concerning the perceived effectiveness among several radio PSAs prior to their release to Nebraska radio stations. Earlier the committee considered ways to promote the new public access catalog and improve accessibility. The committee also offered advice on ways to promote use of a new iOS app for Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD), the Internet resource for direct downloads

of audio and Braille books and magazines.

During this biennium, the Library of Congress began distributing its national audio magazines on digital cartridge with multiple magazines per cartridge. This change required the use of navigation software built-in to the Library of Congress digital players. The Advisory Committee offered strategies to help Nebraska's talking book readers feel more comfortable with the navigation software. They also offered advice on ways to use video in promotion. The committee recommended strategies to promote the program directly to schools and through community centers and medical clinics, including targeting qualifying Nebraskans who are Hispanic.

Committee members for FY2013 and FY2014:

- Jim Berryman**, Grand Island
- Kate Borchman Hassebrook**, Lyons
- Patricia Candy**, Kearney
- Elizabeth Evermann**, Lincoln
- Shelly Gray**, Omaha
- Susan Ledder**, Lincoln
- Linda Marie Mentink**, Columbus
- Brad Meurrens**, Lincoln
- Beth Pazik**, Omaha
- Kristal Platt**, Omaha
- John Wick**, Omaha



Library of Congress releases app for iOS devices:

Nebraskans who are blind, visually impaired, or have a physical disability may now download audio and Braille books and magazines to their iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch.

Register first with the Nebraska Library Commission Talking Book and Braille Service at <https://nlsbard.loc.gov/ne1a/>. Then access the Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) Mobile app through the Apple App Store. The free app allows readers to download from their National Library Service BARD accounts. New selections are added daily.

Public Library Websites Supported by Library Commission

The Nebraska Library Commission facilitated websites for sixty-seven Nebraska libraries through **Nebraska Libraries on the Web**, using WordPress as the website platform and hosting the service on Library Commission servers at no charge to the libraries and without limitation on the size of the sites. Libraries selected customizable templates and received free technology support and online, video-based training from the Library Commission. For more information see <http://libraries.ne.gov/> or contact Michael Sauers, Nebraska Library Commission Technology Innovation Librarian, 402-471-3106, 800-307-2665, or michael.sauers@nebraska.gov.



Internship Grants Awarded

NebraskAccess Provides Reliable Resources

NebraskAccess is the Nebraska Library Commission's public resource portal for Nebraskans—leading to information databases, evaluated websites, government publications, and more. Timely information is provided through seasonal "Hot Topics" and "What's New" links, as well as "Nebraska FAQs," which are created when the Library Commission Information Services reference librarians receive the same question more than once.

NebraskAccess continued to provide free, 24/7, full-text access to thousands of magazines and journals, newspaper articles, biographical information, and genealogical information. Nebraskans logged in with either their Nebraska driver's license or a password from their local library. They used this service to complete work or school assignments, research health and medical topics, keep up on current events, trace family histories, make personal and business economic decisions, and explore hobbies and other topics of personal interest.

The statewide subscription databases received heavy usage as shown by the number of searches undertaken between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2014:

• FirstSearch	1,356,182
• HeritageQuest	226,512
• eLibrary	217,966
• Wilson OmniFile	3,919,802
• Wilson Biographies	926,199
• Books in Print	89,002

Use NebraskAccess at <http://nebraskaccess.ne.gov/>. For more information contact Devra Dragos, see contact information on page 5. *NebraskAccess databases are funded through the State of Nebraska and the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services, as administered by the Nebraska Library Commission.* 

The Nebraska Library Commission and the Nebraska Library Association awarded internship grants to seventeen libraries in March 2013 and twenty-one libraries in March 2014. The grants were funded by the 2010 – 2014 *Cultivating Rural Librarians' 21st Century Skills* grant program. Interns learned about library work as they helped with day-to-day operations and worked on special projects. They conducted summer reading programming, made recommendations for young adult collections, wrote blog posts, assisted customers in the computer lab, and instructed customers on how to check out and download e-books to e-reading devices. Several interns have gone on to become library employees.

One intern shared a story of her Summer 2013 experience: "I got a lot of experience with the summer reading program and all its ins and outs. It was great to see librarians working hard for and with the public to get these children a great learning and entertaining experience all summer long. They provided so many amazing opportunities for families through programs and story-times. Throughout the summer, I produced promotional videos about the summer reading program. By doing this, I learned how to use cameras, video cameras, and Windows Live Movie Maker in much greater detail."

The following libraries received internship grants in one or both years:

- Atkinson Public Library
- Bassett, Rock County Public Library
- Beatrice Public Library
- Cozad Public Library
- Emerson Public Library
- Fremont, Keene Memorial Library
- Grand Island Public Library
- Grant, Hastings Memorial Library
- Howells Public Library
- Kimball Public Library
- La Vista Public Library
- Lincoln City Libraries
- McCook Public Library
- Neligh Public Library
- Norfolk Public Library
- North Bend Public Library
- Omaha Public Library
- Ord Township Library
- Papillion, Sump Memorial Library
- Ponca Carnegie Library
- Schuyler Public Library
- Shelby Public Library
- Stromsburg Public Library
- Valparaiso Public Library
- Verdigre Public Library

Information about internship grants awarded by the Nebraska Library Commission—including links to a database of recipients—is located at <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/grants/>. *This program is funded through a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian program.* 



Rock County Public Library Intern Saresse Clay assists customers at the library.

Library Commission Hosts Center for the Book

The Nebraska Library Commission provided financial and staff assistance during the biennium to the Nebraska Center for the Book, which brings together the state's readers, writers, booksellers, librarians, publishers, printers, educators, and scholars to build the community of the book. The Library Commission supported the following projects:

Nebraska Book Festivals. The 2013 festival, *Believing in Nebraska Writers*, and the 2014 festival, *Deliberate Shapes and Senses*, were held at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. The festivals included author readings by a variety of Nebraska authors with books published in 2012 and 2013, award presentations, exhibits and vendors, panel discussions, writers workshops, and performances by high school students who competed in the *Louder than a Bomb: Omaha Youth Poetry Festival*. The festivals featured Keynote Presentations by Kurt Andersen, author of *True Believers*, and Don Welch, retired Reynolds Poetry Professor at the University of Nebraska at Kearney and author of *Gnomes and Travels*. Special presentations included Andrew Jewell, co-editor of *The Selected Letters of Willa Cather*, and poet Steve Langan on the *Seven Doctors Project*, a Nebraska Writers Collective program. The festivals were jointly sponsored by Humanities Nebraska, Nebraska Center for the Book, Nebraska Cultural Endowment, Nebraska Library Commission, University of Nebraska at Omaha College of Arts and Sciences, and University of Nebraska Press.

Jane Geske Award. The **Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation** was presented the 2013 Jane Geske Award and **Nebraska Library Commission** was presented the 2014 Jane Geske Award. The award—a piece of art by a Nebraska artist—is given annually to honor exceptional contribution to literacy, books, reading, libraries, book-selling, and literature in Nebraska. The award pays tribute to Jane Pope Geske, former director of the Nebraska Library

Commission, founding member of the Nebraska Center for the Book, and long-time active member of many Nebraska library and literary activities.

Mildred Bennett Award. **Jane Renner Hood**, of Lincoln, and **Jane Smith**, of Brownville, were recognized for significant contribution to the fostering of the literary tradition in Nebraska. They were cited for their leadership and service in the promotion of Nebraska literature—following in the footsteps of Mildred Bennett, the charismatic founder and long-time President of the Willa Cather

Pioneer Memorial and Educational Foundation.

Nebraska Book Awards. Nebraska books were honored each year in the categories of anthology, children/young adult, cover/design/illustration, fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. These books were either written by Nebraska authors, published in Nebraska, or set in Nebraska. For a complete list of winners, see <http://centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/awards/winners/nebook.html>.

NCB News. Library Commission staff helped develop and distribute four editions of the Center for the Book newsletter. To access the newsletters, see <http://centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/news.html>.

National Book Festivals. Library Commission staff members Mary Jo Ryan and Devra Dragos joined Mary Ellen Ducey and Donna Kennedy Marvin, of the Nebraska Center for the Book Board, along with volunteers from the Junior League of Washington, D.C., to staff the Nebraska exhibit at the Pavilion of the States in Washington, D.C. They shared information about Nebraska literature with more than 5,000 visitors each year.

National Idea Exchange. The Library Commission provided assistance for Nebraska Center for the Book volunteers to represent the Center for the Book at the National Idea Exchange in Washington, D.C. The information-

sharing activity kept the board apprised of what's happening at the national Center for the Book in the Library of Congress and at the state Centers for the Book around the country.

Letters about Literature.

Nebraska students were recognized each year by Governor Dave Heineman for their letters to authors that influenced their lives. In this annual national reading/writing contest, young readers wrote letters to an author explaining how his or her work changed their way of thinking about the world or themselves. For a complete list of winners, see <http://centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/programs/LAL.html>.

Celebration of Nebraska Books.

Each year this celebration featured the current One Book One Nebraska book selection, honored winners of the Jane Geske and Nebraska Book Awards, and announced the choice for the next One Book One Nebraska reading program. Winning authors read from their books and signed copies. Each year the Nebraska Center for the Book Annual meeting was held just prior to the celebration, with a reception concluding the event.

One Book One Nebraska. The Commission supported the One Book One Nebraska program—assisting with selection and promotion of a title for Nebraska citizens to read to celebrate the literary richness of our state. Willa Cather's *O Pioneers!* was the 2013 selection and the 2014 selection was *Once Upon a Town: The Miracle of the North Platte Canteen* by Bob Greene. Nebraska libraries and other literary and cultural organizations across the state hosted activities and events to encourage all Nebraskans to read and discuss the same book, see <http://centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/programs/onebook.html>. For more information about Center for the Book activities, see <http://centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/> and <https://www.facebook.com/NebraskaCenterfortheBook>, or contact Mary Jo Ryan, Nebraska Library Commission Communications Coordinator, maryjo.ryan@nebraska.gov, 402-471-3434, or 800-307-2665. 



Regional Library System Highlights:

Eastern

- Sponsored/cosponsored continuing education including School Librarians Day, Youth Services Retreat (in cooperation with **Southeast Library System**), Summer Reading Program, Board Roles and Responsibilities, Personnel Management, Digital Collections, Marketing, Policy Development, and Accreditation and Strategic Planning.
- Facilitated regular meetings of system groups including DIRECT (public library directors) and CLICK (youth services librarians).
- Consulted with and visited libraries around the system on topics such as Collection Management, Facilities, Technology, and Accreditation and Strategic Planning.
- Provided orientation and support for new library directors.
- Loaned 168 book club kits for discussion groups, technology and equipment, professional books and journals, and die cut machines.
- Supported librarian attendance at national and statewide conferences.

Meridian

- Sponsored/cosponsored continuing education including a Summer Reading Program Workshop, Focus on Youth, Author Jean Lukesh on books and writing, Keeping Up With Technology Workshop, Winter Workshop, Basic E-Rate, Strategic Planning, and Personnel Policies.
- In cooperation with **Republican Valley Library Services**, cosponsored an online PLA Spring Symposium site license and a visit to four schools and two public libraries (attendance: nearly 500) by “Cowgirl Peg,” children’s author Peg Sundberg, to address character-building and the writing process.
- Weeding projects included assisting at individual libraries and sponsoring the “Week of Weeding” each year, during which school and public libraries weeded 7,453 items.
- Conducted a system-wide survey.
- Visited all the northern libraries and many southern libraries, with an emphasis on those with new directors. Consultation topics included

technology training, strategic planning, board relations, creating and editing “Nebraska Libraries on the Web” websites, NebraskaAccess, collection management, and general library administration.

- Added new titles to book club sets, with seventy sets circulating this biennium.
- The die cutting machines were scheduled each month for a total of twenty circulations for the two years.

Northeast

- Sponsored 36 workshops—including day-long annual meetings—with 960 attendees.
- Loaned 755 books, journals, videos, etc.
- Maintained a website through the Nebraska Libraries on the Web project, with 23,086 hits in the last year, and assisted libraries in setting up their own websites.
- Maintained and frequently updated a System Facebook page (65 followers), a Twitter account (28 followers), and a Pinterest account at <http://www.pinterest.com/nelibsyst/>.
- Visited 95 libraries, traveling 14,881 miles.
- Began a pricing discount opportunity for Freegal, with six libraries subscribing.
- Sponsored a “Week of Weeding,” with fourteen libraries participating.
- Provided fifteen OverDrive training workshops for library staff and customers at eleven libraries.
- Assisted libraries in setting up “Nebraska Libraries on the Web” websites.
- Circulated book club kits, training videos/books/journals, and equipment.
- In partnership with Nebraska Library Commission staff, trained and consulted with libraries on accreditation, strategic planning, and Summer Reading Program.

Panhandle

- Provided Jobalike sessions and public librarian meetings for networking and idea-sharing.
- Facilitated author tours.
- Helped libraries improve their collections by assisting with weeding and

collection development projects, adding materials to the professional resources collection, and routing professional journals.

- Circulated books, videos, iPod, inventory scanner, journals, book bags, binding system, laminator, and Wii gaming kit.
- Helped Panhandle libraries set up “Nebraska Libraries on the Web” websites.
- Facilitated training, including joint workshops with NE School Librarians Association, other systems, and the Library Commission.
- Implemented a shared automation project.

Republican Valley

- Facilitated workshops about advocacy, storytelling, computer troubleshooting, health information for patrons, developing a library Facebook page, personnel policies, weeding, and video book trailers.
- Cleaned and repaired nearly 1,700 discs to keep them circulating through libraries.
- Established a popular new “Display Ideas” service, with at least ten display ideas provided each month, and a “Workshops on Demand” service that allows librarians to select the topic, determine the date, and set the time to have workshops delivered in their libraries (see <http://libraries.ne.gov/rvls/workshops-on-demand/> for list of available topics).
- Consulted with both public and school librarians on a variety of topics including the use of e-books and e-readers, as well as increasing numbers of Library Board Consultations (twelve in one year) necessitated by the revised *Public Library Accreditation Guidelines*.
- Circulated audiobooks, professional books and journals, classroom book sets, e-reader kit, Spanish language kits, and equipment.
- Granted twenty-seven scholarships.
- Coordinated the purchase of 145 puppets.

Southeast

- Provided consultation on over 60 topics, including computer policy &

(continued on page 17)

Regional Library System Highlights: (continued)

children, automation systems, legislative issues, DVD storage, strategic planning and accreditation, E-Rate, facilities planning, financial practices, privacy, and weeding.

- Provided 33 continuing education activities to 1,000+ attendees on more than 110 topics including: Personnel Policies, Google Apps & Websites, Mobile Tech Training, Tablet Devices, Medline+, Professional Journal Reviews, Service Animals in the Library, Disaster

Planning, American FactFinder, Genealogy, Pinterest & Facebook, Booktalks, Summer Reading Program, Golden Sower Award, and Wikipedia.

- The SELS van traveled more than 9,000 miles and carried more than 40 passengers each year.
- Collaborated on projects with more than fifteen community library organizations.
- Hosted the annual Training Extravaganza.



Commission Funds Regional Library Systems

The Library Commission provided \$1,061,808 in continuing financial support for Nebraska's six Regional Library Systems during the biennium. These nonprofit organizations worked to improve library services through cooperation between all types of libraries and school media centers within each System area. With the support of the Library Commission, the Regional Library Systems provided to member libraries:

Resource Sharing – Among items loaned were book discussion kits, videos, laptops and projectors, Wii gaming kits, Playaway books, professional journals and magazines, storytelling kits, iPods and MP3 players, e-readers, laminator, binding system, Poetry kits, Spanish kits, DVD players, cutting machines and dies, and scanners.

Consultation – System administrators consulted with member libraries on numerous topics including weeding, collection development, strategic planning and accreditation, E-Rate discounts, personnel policies, automation systems, interlibrary loan, computer security, censorship, and data collection. They communicated with member libraries in person and through newsletters, websites, flyers, e-mail, listservs,

Facebook pages, and annual meetings.

Continuing Education – The Systems partnered with the Library Commission to present sessions on Trustee Training and Board Development (including “Planning for Nebraska Public Libraries”), leadership (including the Library Leadership Institute), children’s services (including summer reading programs), book repair, fund raising, library ethics, intellectual freedom, library collection development, e-books/e-readers, vod and pod casting, and LibraryThing. They facilitated annual meetings, specialized meetings and training for public library directors and youth services librarians, workshops on automation software, and pre-conferences and sessions at the Nebraska Library Association/Nebraska School Librarians Association conferences. They taught online Basic Skills classes and staffed exhibit booths to educate stakeholders about local library services. System Directors arranged for a variety of national speakers to come to Nebraska, along with local and regional authors. They sponsored scholarships for local librarians to attend workshops, and in conjunction with the Nebraska Library Commission and the Nebraska Library Association, organized a bus trip to the American Library Association Conference in Chicago.



Nebraskans Are

United for Libraries



Nebraska libraries continued to benefit from the resources and support of *United for Libraries*, a division of the American Library Association. *United for Libraries* brings together library voices to speak out on behalf of library services and free public access to information. *United for Libraries* is a national network of enthusiastic library supporters who believe in the importance of libraries as the social and intellectual centers of communities and campuses—educating and organizing the strongest voices for libraries: those who use them, raise money for them, and govern them.

The Library Commission supported membership to *United for Libraries* for all of the state’s public libraries to ensure that Nebraska library staff, friends, trustees, and foundations can take advantage of services to enhance fundraising, advocacy, and public awareness. A special website to help Nebraska libraries access *United for Libraries* resources was made available at <http://www.ala.org/united/nebraska/>. It features information about the resources available to Nebraska library Trustees, library directors, and library staff at no charge to them, including:

- **Trustee Academy.** Five online courses
- **Engaging Today’s Volunteers for Libraries and Friends.** Webinar series on recruitment and retention
- **Resource Collection Zones.** Current and archived newsletters, toolkits, electronic publications, special offers, etc. for Friends, Foundations, and Trustees
- **Power Guide for Successful Advocacy.** A step-by-step guide to developing an advocacy campaign, with examples of talking points, flyers, petitions, etc. at <http://www.ala.org/united/powerguide/>

For more information see the *United for Libraries* website at <http://www.ala.org/united/about/> or contact Rod Wagner, Nebraska Library Commission Director, rod.wagner@nebraska.gov, 402-471-4001, or 800-307-2665.



Grant Partnership Assists Small Public Libraries

A partnership between the Nebraska Library Commission and Nebraska Community Foundation resulted in fifteen public libraries receiving a helping hand during the biennium, thanks to the generosity of a lifelong educator, the late Shirley Kreutz Bennett of Lincoln. Each year the Kreutz Bennett Donor-Advised Fund, an affiliated fund of the Nebraska Community Foundation (NCF), accepts proposals for matching grants for public libraries in communities with populations of fewer than 3,000. In the past two grant cycles, \$173,242 was distributed in three grant areas: **Planning Grants** leading to accreditation, **Enhancement Grants** to improve library services, and **Facilities Grants** for new construction or the renovation, restoration or rehabilitation of existing libraries.

For more information contact Reggi Carlson, NCF Communications Director, rcarlson@nebcommfound.org, 402-323-7331, or see <http://www.nebcommfound.org/affiliated-funds/find/details/2446/>.

For assistance in analyzing a library project and determining which category to consider for application, contact Richard Miller, see contact information on page 4. ➡

Commission Funds Continuing Education

The Nebraska Library Commission continued a long-standing commitment to support Nebraska libraries in their efforts to improve library service by providing continuing education (CE) and training for library staff members. From July 2012 through June 2014, the Commission sponsored or underwrote 751 events, attended by 6,764 Nebraska library staffers. These training activities included annual "Big Talk from Small Libraries" online conferences, "Basic Skills" training, "Cataloging Certificate" training, E-Rate training, Strategic Planning training, Summer Reading training, and *NCompass Live* webinars.

The Nebraska Library Commission awarded \$16,035 in Continuing Education and Training Grants during the biennium to accredited public

libraries, institutional libraries, or regional library systems. The funds were used to provide a variety of training and continuing education to Nebraska library workers and trustees, including sessions on marketing, partnership-building, and customer service. A grant also funded a bus to transport Nebraska librarians to the American Library Association Annual Conference in Chicago. An additional \$19,350 was earmarked to send forty library staff members to the Association for Rural and Small Libraries Conference in Omaha.

For more information, contact Laura Johnson, Nebraska Library Commission Continuing Education Coordinator, 402-471-2694, 800-307-2665, or laura.johnson@nebraska.gov. ➡



Pioneer Consortium Expands

Pioneer, the open-source cooperative catalog consortium of Nebraska libraries, has expanded to twenty-three libraries, including libraries in Alma, Arapahoe, Atkinson, Axtell, Beatrice, Bennington, Blue Hill, Central City, David City, Dundy County, Grand Island, Grant, Hildreth, Holdrege, Lincoln, Papillion, St. Paul, South Sioux City, Stromsburg, Superior, Valley, and Valparaiso, as well as Western Nebraska Community College.

The consortium continued to grow the cooperative catalog, providing software improvements to facilitate the effectiveness of the catalog and cooperative activities among the members. Libraries chose to join as an alternative to replacing current stand-alone systems with another proprietary system at a higher cost.

The consortium received grants of \$34,020 from the Nebraska Library Commission to share costs with the members for software development and improvement. The consortium worked cooperatively with other library consortia across the country that use the same Koha Integrated Library System software for their shared catalogs.

For membership information contact Steve Fosselman, 308-385-5333, or sf@gi.lib.ne.us. For technical questions, contact Andrew (Sherm) Sherman, 402-597-2050, or andrew.sherman65@gmail.com. *Significant funding for this project has been provided through grants from the Nebraska Library Commission, funded through the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act.* ➡

NEBRASKA LEARNS 2.0

An ongoing learning resource for the
Nebraska library community



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Nebraska Learns 2.0

Nebraska Learns 2.0 is the Nebraska Library Commission's online, self-directed learning program that encourages participants to experiment with and learn about new and emerging technologies that are reshaping the way people, society, and libraries access information and communicate. Nebraska Learns 2.0 debuted on October 1, 2008, and covered 23 "Things" (lessons) in sixteen weeks.

Currently this ongoing, a-la-carte learning resource features one new "Thing" each month. Participants pick and choose which "Things" to do. They receive one CE credit for each "Thing" completed before the end of the month in which it was introduced.

Participants can also explore a "BookThing." Each month a title is picked that has relevance to librarianship and/or information theory. Participants are asked to read the book and answer questions about it during the designated time period to earn CE credit.

In this biennium, 24 "Things" and

24 "BookThings" were offered. Seventeen participants tried out new technologies, such as Telling the Library Story with Infographics, Tagxedo, RSS After Google Reader, Bitstrips, Create Your Own Online Games with "Purpose Games," Mapping & Geolocation Tools, and NetGalley.

Participants also read books, including *Tubes: A Journey to the Center of the Internet*, *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*, *United Breaks Guitars: The Power of One Voice in the Age of Social Media*, and *Little Brother*.

These educational programs are archived on the Library Commission Website and are available for access asynchronously. There are eighty-one "Things" and thirty "BookThings" for library staff and volunteers to access whenever convenient. To learn more see the blog at <http://nlcblogs.nebraska.gov/nelearns/>. For more information contact Christa Burns, see contact information on page 7.

Statewide Motion Picture License Provided

The Nebraska Library Commission funded a statewide license for public viewing of motion pictures in Nebraska public libraries during the biennium, at a cost of \$32,580. All Nebraska public libraries are covered by the license between the Library

Commission and Movie Licensing USA to allow motion pictures to be shown as part of library services and programming at Nebraska public libraries. For more information contact Sally Snyder, see contact information on page 10.

E-Rate Discounts Awarded

Nebraska schools and libraries received \$21.5 million in discounts on telecommunications costs during E-Rate Funding Years 2012 and 2013 (July 1, 2012-June 30, 2014) through the Universal Service Fund (E-Rate) program. Schools and libraries in the state submitted 1,566 applications for 3,087 requests.

Nebraska libraries were awarded \$604,522 in discounts. Discounts ranged from 20 to 90 percent, with 121 libraries participating, including the Nebraska Library Commission and Regional Library Systems. Eighty-three libraries were awarded telecommunications discounts, and thirty-eight were also awarded discounts on Internet services. Eighty-seven of the 121 libraries participating in the E-Rate program had 60 to 70 percent discounts on their telecommunications and/or Internet access bills.

Discounts were awarded on a sliding scale based on the percentage of students in the local school district eligible for the free and reduced school lunch program, an indicator of the local level of need, and the County's Rural or Urban status as determined by the U.S. Census.

The Nebraska Library Commission provides education, training, and consultation services to Nebraska library staff to assist with E-Rate applications. For more information about E-Rate support in Nebraska, see <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/erate/> or contact Christa Burns, see contact information on page 7. For more information about the E-Rate program, see <http://www.usac.org/sl/>



Nebraska Library Commission

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The Nebraska Library Commission Reference Service had the busiest month ever in March 2014, responding to 2,829 requests for information for an average of 134 customer transactions per day.

CURRENT RESIDENT OR:



Nebraska Library Commission Highlights and Statistics/July 1, 2012, through June 30, 2014

- ☞ The Nebraska Library Commission circulated **18,011** items, with book club circulation representing **15,532**.
- ☞ The Library Commission served **5,816** customers on-site.
- ☞ The Library Commission loaned **486** items to other libraries.
- ☞ The Library Commission borrowed **13,168** items from other libraries for Nebraska library customers.
- ☞ Nebraska OverDrive Group library customers (from **150** participating libraries) downloaded **170,947** audiobooks and **577,560** e-books.
- ☞ The Library Commission's Nebraska Memories collection grew to **10,748** images and audio files.
- ☞ **5,145** state documents were added to the Library Commission's collection, bringing the total to **165,299**.
- ☞ **1,605** federal documents were added to the Library Commission's collection, bringing the total to **47,215**.
- ☞ **2,555** electronic state documents were added, bringing the total of state e-docs to **8,032**. These e-docs were accessed **123,465** times.
- ☞ Nebraska Library Commission staff and guest trainers broadcast **102** *NCompass Live* sessions, with **2,134** attending live and thousands viewing the archived recordings.
- ☞ The Nebraska Library Commission hosted and supported websites for **69** public libraries and **three** regional library systems.
- ☞ The Nebraska Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service circulated **315,820** talking books, magazines, Braille materials, and videos with audio description to **3,683** customers.
- ☞ The Talking Book and Braille Service recorded **288** magazine issues and **24** books.
- ☞ The Talking Book and Braille Service duplicated **498** audio cassettes and **60,537** digital cartridges.
- ☞ Talking Book and Braille Service customers downloaded **43,004** audiobooks and **1,426** audio magazines, **1,469** Braille books, **302** Braille magazines, and **79** music instruction pieces.
- ☞ **6,764** Nebraska library staff and board members attended **751** continuing education events sponsored or underwritten by the Nebraska Library Commission, including **999** who participated in Basic Skills sessions.
- ☞ There are currently **910** participants in the Nebraska Librarian Certification program, up from **891** in FY 2013.
- ☞ **175** public libraries were accredited.

